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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Tarek Ibrahim

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Docket Clerk
P O Box 800889
Dallas, TX 75380

EXAMINER

JAMA, ISAAK R

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/587,879	Applicant(s) IBRAHIM ET AL.	
	Examiner ISAAK JAMA	Art Unit 4163	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 July 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>08/20/2007</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 3 and 4 are objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 3 recites “.....the device comprising....”. There is no antecedent basis for “the device” in the claim. As to claim 4, claim 4 is dependent on apparatus claim 3, but it recites “The method in accordance with claim 3 further comprising: means for associating the mobile terminal to a first access point in the WLAN”. Appropriate correction for both claims is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

3. Claims 1-4 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 7,164,915 (Zaki).

4. As to claim 1, Zaki teaches a method of hand-off for a mobile terminal from a first access point to a second access point in a wireless local area network (WLAN) (Title), the method comprising: measuring in a mobile terminal signal to noise ratio (SNR) of first RF signals received from the first access point (Figure 2, step S32, column 2, lines 34-36); if the measured SNR of the first RF signals exceeds a first threshold (column 3, lines 20-26), measuring SNR of RF signals received from a plurality of candidate access

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points in a roaming candidate list stored on the mobile terminal; determining from measured SNRs of the candidate access points whether any of the measured SNR exceed a second threshold (column 3, lines 17-18; i.e. low SNR threshold), and if so, identifying those candidate access points in a new association list; selecting one of the candidate access points in the new association list; and attempting to associate the mobile terminal to the selected candidate access point (column 3, lines 50-64).

5. As to claim 2, Zaki teaches a method further comprising: associating the mobile terminal to the first access point in the WLAN (column 2, lines 31-36); and receiving from the first access point the roaming candidate list identifying the plurality of candidate access points in the WLAN (column 3, lines 50-51).

6. As to claim 3, Zaki teaches mobile terminal operable for wireless connection to one or more access points in a wireless local area network (WLAN) (Figure 1, # 14_{1N} and #s 10₁ and 10₂), the device comprising: means for measuring signal to noise ratio (SNR) of first RF signals received from the first access point (Figure 2, step S32, column 2, lines 34-36); if the measured SNR of the first RF signals exceeds a first threshold (column 3, lines 20-26), means for measuring SNR of RF signals received from each of a plurality of candidate access points in a roaming candidate list; means for determining from measured SNRs of the candidate access points whether any of the measured SNR exceed a second threshold, and if so, identifying those candidate access points in a new association list; means for selecting one of the candidate access points in the new association list; and means for attempting to associate the mobile device to the selected candidate access point (column 3, lines 50-64).

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7. As to claim 4, Zaki teaches a method in accordance with claim 3 further comprising: means for associating the mobile terminal to a first access point in the WLAN (column 2, lines 31-36); and means for receiving from the first access point the roaming candidate list identifying the plurality of candidate access points in the WLAN (column 3, lines 50-51).

8. As to claim 7, Zaki teaches a mobile terminal for communicating with one or more access points in a wireless local area network (WLAN) (Figure 1, # 14_{1N} and #s 10₁ and 10₂), the device comprising: a processor (Figure 3, # 24); a transceiver coupled to the processor (Figure 3, # 22); an antenna coupled to the transceiver for receiving and transmitting RF signals from and to the one or more access points in the WLAN (Figure 3, # 20); and wherein the processor is operable for: measuring signal to noise ratio (SNR) of first RF signals received from the first access point (Figure 3, # 24, column 3, lines 52-53), if the measured SNR of the first RF signals exceeds a first threshold (column 3, lines 20-26), measuring SNR of RF signals received from each of a plurality of candidate access points in a roaming candidate list stored in the mobile terminal, determining from measured SNRs of the candidate access points whether any of the measured SNR exceed a second threshold (column 3, lines 17-18, i.e. low SNR threshold), and if so, identifying those candidate access points in a new association list, selecting one of the candidate access points in the new association list, and attempting to associate the mobile device to the selected candidate access point (column 3, lines 50-64).

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9. As to claim 8, Zaki teaches that the mobile terminal in accordance with claim 7 wherein the processor is further operable to: associate the mobile terminal to a first access point in the WLAN; and receive from the first access point the roaming candidate list identifying the plurality of candidate access points in the WLAN (claim 11).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 5-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 7,164,915 (Zaki) in view U.S. Patent Publication Number 2005/0138178 (Astarabadi)

12. As to claims 5 and 6, Zaki teaches a mobile terminal in a wireless area network, in which the mobile terminal is associated with a first access point in the network (abstract), and signal to noise ratio (SNR) of first RF signals received from the first access point is measured (Figure 2, step S32, column 2, lines 34-36); wherein a SNR of RF signals received from a plurality of candidate access points in a roaming candidate list are measured and it is determined from measured SNRs of the candidate access points whether any of the measured SNRs exceeds a second threshold (column 3, lines 17-18; i.e. low SNR threshold), and if so, identifying those candidate access points in a new association list, the state machine transitioning from the first state to the second if the measured SNR of the first RF signals exceeds a first threshold (column 3, lines 20-

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26); a third state in which one of the candidate access points in the new association list is selected and an attempt is made to associate the mobile terminal to the selected candidate access point, the state machine transitioning from the second state to the third state if there is at least one candidate access point in the new association list (column 3, lines 50-64). But, Zaki fails to disclose the use of a state machine as well as identifying a first, second, third and a fourth state. Astarabadi discloses a wireless mobility management system and method for identifying a group of wireless access points (abstract), and that prior to communicating data, wireless stations establish an association with their corresponding access points (page 3, paragraph 0033), and that a wireless station listens for beacons to identify APs within its communication range. After identifying AP, the wireless station and the AP may perform a mutual authentication by exchanging several management frames as part of the process. After successful authentication, the wireless station moves into the second state, authenticated and unassociated. Moving from the second state to the third and final state (i.e. fourth state), authenticated and associated, involves the wireless station sending an association request frame and the AP responding with an association response frame (page 3, paragraph 0034). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Astarabadi in the handover system of Zaki in order to track the different stages a mobile goes through during a handoff.

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13. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S.

Patent Number 7,164,915 (Zaki) in view U.S. Patent Publication Number 2005/0138178 (Astarabadi) and further in view of Alternative Wireless (Davi).

14. As to claim 9, Zaki teaches a wireless local area network (WLAN), the WLAN comprising: a plurality of sets of access points operable for communicating wirelessly with one or more remote client devices (Figure 1, # 14_{1N} and #s 10₁ and 10₂). But Zaki fails to teach that each set of access points defines a cell having a predefined communication coverage area within the WLAN; a plurality of switches communicatively coupled to access points; and the access points in a first cell are operable for transmitting a roaming candidate list to a mobile device associated with one of the access points in the first cell, the list identifying one or more neighborhood access points. Astarabadi teaches that each access point defines a cell having a predefined communication coverage area within the WLAN (Figure 5, AP1-AP4), and a plurality of switches coupled to the access points (Figure 5, N1 and N2), and that the access points in a first cell are operable for transmitting a roaming candidate list to a mobile device associated with one of the access points in the first cell, the list identifying one or more neighborhood access points (Figure 2, # 450, Figure 3, # 468; column 3, paragraph 0041). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Astarabadi in the handover system of Zaki in order to manage the network by dividing into cells, and facilitate seamless handoffs. But neither Zaki nor Astarabadi disclose that the communication coverage area of each defined cell is less than about 1000 hundred

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square feet. Davi discloses indoor wireless networks constitute picocells, and that picocell coverage is in the order of 150 to 1000 square feet (column 1, lines 5-12).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Davi into the combined system of Zaki and Astarabadi in order to implement the network in smaller area such as sporting arenas or lecture halls.

Conclusion

15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patent Number 7,400,604 (Lee et al.) teaches a probing method for fast handoff in a WLAN. U.S. Patent Number 7,289,472 (Yano et al.) teaches a handoff method of a wireless local area network (LAN). U.S. Patent Number 7,236,786 (Shen et al.) teaches a method and system for providing fast handoff in a WLAN-like communication system using active neighboring sets. U.S. Patent Application Number 2006/0040666 (Narasimha et al.) teaches a mobile-assisted handoff in a wireless local area network.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ISAAK JAMA whose telephone number is (571)270-5887. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 - 5:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Robinson can be reached on (571) 272-2319. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/IRJ/

/Mark A. Robinson/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 4163